(3) THE AGRICULTURISTS' RELIEF (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1958.

* SRI K. M. RAMASAMY GOUNDER: Sir, I beg leave to introduce the Agriculturists' Relief (Amendment) Bill, 1958.

The motion was duly seconded.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is—

"That leave be granted to introduce the Agriculturists' Relief (Amendment) Bill, 1958".

The motion was put and carried and leave was granted.

* SRI K. M. RAMASAMY GOUNDER: I introduce the Bill.

B. RESOLUTIONS.

(1) AMENDMENT TO G.O. MS. NO. 1298, HOME, DATED 28TH APRIL 1956.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Adityan is not present in the House.

* SRI K. M. RAMASAMY GOUNDER: I shall move it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Has the hon. Member been authorized? He must make a motion to that effect.

* SRI K. M. RAMASAMY GOUNDER: Sir, under rule 144 (3) of the Council Rules, I move—

"That permission be granted to move the Resolution standing in the name of Sri S. T. Adityan."

The motion was duly seconded.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is—

"That permission be granted to move the Resolution standing in the name of Sri S. T. Adityan."

The motion was put and carried.

* SRI K. M. RAMASAMY GOUNDER: I move—

"This Council recommends to the Government to encourage small operators of motor buses, as against fleet-owners and for this purpose the directions contained in G.O. Ms. No. 1298, Home, dated 28th April 1956, for the grant of stage carriage permits be suitably amended so as to (1) suspend, for the next three years, the grant of permits for new bus routes to operators, having more than five buses; (2) set apart, for new entrants, ten per cent of all new routes; (3) omit the words 'other things being equal' occurring in paragraph 2 (4) (1) of the Government Order; (4) allot a minus mark for every bus held by an operator in excess of five buses; and (5) omit the marks for sector qualifications."

The Resolution was duly seconded.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Resolution moved—

"This Council recommends to the Government to encourage small operators of motor buses, as against fleet-owners and for this purpose the directions contained in G.O. Ms. No. 1298, Home,

dated 28th April 1956, for the grant of stage carriage permits be suitably amended so as to (1) suspend, for the next three years, the grant of permits for new bus routes to operators, having more than five buses; (2) set apart, for new entrants, ten per cent of all new routes; (3) omit the words ' other things being equal ' occurring in paragraph 2 (4) (1) of the Government Order; (4) allot a minus mark for every bus held by an operator in excess of five buses; and (5) omit the marks for sector qualifications.''

3-20 p.m. * SRI K. M. RAMASAMY GOUNDER : Mr. Chairman, Sir, this is a Resolution just to amend the existing Government Order referred to. As it is, there is a great deal of monopoly in the matter of motor industry. Only big fleet-owners get the advantage. With the amendment proposed, there will be new blood introduced and it will be to the advantage of the public as well as those people who are interested in the motor industry. With these few remarks, I commend the Resolution for adoption by the House.

* SRI T. PURUSHOTHAM : Mr. Chairman, Sir, the resolution before the House proposes that G.O. Ms. No. 1298, Home, dated the 28th April 1956, laying down the rules for the grant of stage carriage permits should be suitably amended. I wish to bring to the notice of the House in this connection that the Government Order had already been amended by Order No. 2265, dated the 9th August 1958. In that Order, Government have sanctioned the very proposals adumbrated in the Resolution, namely, that bus routes should be classified into three classes, namely, short routes, medium routes and long routes. Short routes will cover a distance of fifteen miles. For these short routes new entrants are to be preferred. That is the latest Government Order in question. I should like to congratulate the Hon. the Minister for Transport on having introduced this new scheme. We have been complaining that there is no scope for new entrants to come into the field. I am glad that the Hon. Minister Sri Ramaiah has thought it fit to introduce this long-felt and needed reform.

Sir, having said that, I should like to point out that the short distance shuttle service for fifteen miles to be allowed to the new entrants is too short. The distance should be at least 25 miles. Fifteen miles provided in the rules would be too short. It will not be economical for the operators to take up such short routes. I would, therefore, request the Hon. Minister to consider this question and make the distance of the short routes at least 25 miles.

Sir, for medium routes, the distance is fixed at maximum miles 75. All those who are having less than five buses should be permitted to build up a viable unit of at least five buses. Then only it would be economical. I would, therefore, insist on the Government that they should specially consider this problem of small operators having less than five buses and encourage them to build up a viable unit.

13th September 1958] [Sri T. Purushotham]

In this connexion, I should like to point out that Government should consider taking up inter-State and long distance routes. Now, Government have said that routes of 75 to 250 miles will be covered by the fleet-owners, including express service. There are routes newly opened between Madras and Tiruchirappalli, Madras and Salem, Madras and Bangalore and so on. These long distance routes as well as inter-State routes should be nationalized. I am glad that in the case of Nagercoil-Kanyakumari route, the Government have recently decided that it should be taken up as a nationalized Government transport service. I hope that the Government would extend that principle to other long distance routes so that Government could have a network of nationalized transport routes throughout the State.

Though a concession has been shown to new entrants, the latest Government Order issued in the matter introduces a mark system based on sector qualification. For sector qualification one mark is allowed. When new entrants come in, the sector qualification should not be a deciding factor. I believe it is not the intention of the Government that this qualification should be insisted on in respect of new entrants. When these people have no buses at all, there can be no sector qualification. In order to avoid doubts in the matter, I hope the Government will see to it that a circular is issued to all the Regional Transport Authorities that in the case of new entrants for whom short routes of fifteen miles and shuttle service are to be granted, this sector qualification should not be considered at all. I am sure the Hon. Minister will consider this also. I only wanted to bring these few points to the notice of the House and the Hon. Minister in view of the fact that a Resolution on the matter was placed before the House. Thank you, Sir.

Sri K. BALASUBRAMANYA AYYAR : Mr. Chairman, Sir, without the original Government Order and the other Order mentioned by the hon. Member Sri Purushotham, we could not follow the technical terms such as "sector qualifications", "short routes", "long routes" and other matters referred to by him, intelligently or with interest. (Laughter.)

Sri T. PURUSHOTHAM : The principles referred to by me, of course, may be accepted.

Dr. A. LAKSHMANASWAMI MUDALIAR : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would not have intervened at all at this stage of the debate but for the remarks of the hon. Member Sri Purushotham. As usual, he has introduced into his speech many controversial subjects, the most important of which is the nationalization of bus routes. I must confess, Sir, it is most unfortunate that in this country everything is viewed from the point of view of nationalization as if it means efficiency and economy. I can say from experience with facts and figures that in many instances this is not the case. But I should like to give one instance of how transport service is worked.

[Dr. A. Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar] [13th September 1958

to the benefit of the public. It has nothing to do with the Government, the bus-owners or others. But it has only to do with the convenience of the public.

Sir, the most excellent form of transport is, as the Hon. the Leader of the House will vouchsafe, the bus tarnsport in the United States, namely, the Greyhound buses which run over thousands of miles and not over a hundred and two hundred miles. The hon. Member Sri Purushotham thinks that the bus-owner should have a route of at least 25 miles and not 15 miles as proposed by the Government. He wants that 15 should be made 25. Let us, for God's sake, have better ambitions. Let the bus-owner take his buses at least up to Chingleput, a distance of 35 miles. (Interruption.) The new entrants would like to have breathing space on the route. Apart from that, Sir, let me give an illustration. It is a distance of more than a thousand miles from Chicago to San Francisco, and there are three competitive methods of transport between these two places. One is aeroplane, the other is the rail which is exceedingly comfortable and the third is the 'Greyhound' buses. If anybody were to go to Chicago, he would see these 'Greyhound' buses.

SRI T. PURUSHOTHAM : Why are they so called?

DR. A. LAKSHMANASWAMI MUDALIAR : Because they have the picture of the Greyhound racing along so that the public may realize with what speed and efficiency the buses can go.

SRI V. V. RAMASWAMI : Our transport buses bear the picture of the 'lion'.

3-30 p.m. DR. A. LAKSHMANASWAMI MUDALIAR : What I was going to say was this. The competition between the three forms of transport, all of them by private enterprise, has given the greatest benefit to the passengers concerned. The fare from Chicago to San Francisco is 99 dollars which is equivalent to about Rs. 500. The fare by rail is something like 85 dollars and by the Greyhound bus it is about 75 dollars. The manner in which they calculate the fare is that the air route takes you swiftest. On the other hand, there is no method for meals being supplied on the way. The passenger who goes by rail has to furnish himself with the necessary meals and in the United States, as apart from our country, everybody believes that he must have sufficient amount of the creature comforts wherever he be and to whatever part he may be travelling. So, that little difference between the air fare and the rail fare is meant for those creature comforts. But when it comes to the Greyhound bus, it takes a little longer time not only to take the passenger to the various places but also to give him a beautiful idea of the scenery. That is how transport is developed. Unfortunately, we suffer from that one thing like King Charles' head and it is nationalization. I am sorry that in this context the hon. Member Sri Purushotham should have once

more brought in this nationalization business. All that I would like to say is that it is good to encourage private enterprise. We have been too long condemning private enterprise and, if I may say so, long before the Government realized their duty, it was the private sector that gave us some method of transport in buses. I know of two eminent persons in this line. One is Sri T. V. Sundaram Ayyangar of Madurai and the other is Mr. G. D. Naidu of Coimbatore. I hope, therefore, that this Resolution will not only be accepted but that the Government will improve upon it and see that this sort of transport by the private sector is encouraged, but with the additional safeguards that ought to be made for safe transport.

I have spoken to the Leader of the House about the dangers of night travel in motor cars. I am sure he must have experienced this as many of us have experienced. Till we reach our destination, we do not know whether we will reach home or not. Therefore, I once again say that the danger is even greater in Government transport than in any other transport. It is much greater in respect of lorries. Facts will prove for themselves and no question is necessary on that basis. Although I have repeated time and again that the head-lights must be dimmed over long distance routes, no action has been taken. I stated four years ago that the Government transport should be as liable to the attention of the Police as anybody else. Still the rule is that the Police should not interfere with the Government transport buses.

* THE HON. SRI R. VENKATARAMAN : I am sorry that is not the fact. Ordinary traffic errors or faults are enquired into by the departmental committee on which the traffic police officer is represented. In all other cases regular action by the Police is taken.

DR. A. LAKSHMANASWAMI MUDALIAR : This was given expression to by the then Inspector-General of Police Mr. Devasahayam in the year 1953 or 1954. I shall be very glad if that information is not based on facts. All that I wish to draw the attention of the Government to is the fact that the danger in regard to transport, particularly transport which is run through the authority of the Government, is much greater than in the transport that is carried on by private concerns. I hope this will be considered by the Government very carefully.

SRI MOHAMED RAZA KHAN : Sir, the hon. Member Sri Purushotham has, as usual, brought heat into the discussion by introducing the subject of nationalization. I am not discussing that but that provoked the Leader of the Opposition and rightly to give some good and wholesome advice to the Treasury Benches, particularly, to the Leader of the House, about nationalized bus service. I am not getting into that controversy.

With regard to the Resolution on hand, I think the Minister in charge of Transport will have facts and figures as to what happened in the course of the last ten or fteen years to make the demand

for these bus permits or bus routes go up by leaps and bounds. I think a time there was in pre-War days when bus service was working at a loss. All those who were running one or two buses had almost to withdraw them from service because they could not keep up. But as conditions improved and as the traffic increased and as people also developed the habit of going to the various places either on business or on some other work, the bus transport service became a paying proposition. I hope the Hon. Minister will have facts and figures as to how many new entrants got these bus permits from the year 1946. As far as I know—I am not speaking with any personal information—even people who were having one or two buses went on increasing the number of buses. So, a person who might have been owning three or four buses in 1946 is now called a fleet-owner with a strength of 46 buses. Now, more people have desired to get in. Particularly, in a country like ours where opportunities for business or industry are very limited, naturally there may be certain classes of people who may like to take to the bus service as a business proposition. Therefore, the issue is whether the Government will encourage the policy of going on giving bus permits to those who are already in the line with a fleet-strength of forty or fifty buses or whether they will try to divert at least a portion to new entrants. I am told by the hon. Member Sri Purushotham who sometimes is the spokesman of the Government (Dr. A. Sreenivasan : Always) that the Government have already amended the rules. (Interruption.) I think it is nothing wrong to be a good spokesman. We are told that the Government have already amended that particular rule so that new entrants will also have an opportunity to run a bus service. It is quite possible that the present people who may get one or two permits of this type may also, in course of time, develop. However, the policy is a good one and I surely welcome it. The hon. Member Sri Purushotham will rightly remark about this. I do not know on what basis the Government have come to a decision. But I am sure many Members will agree with me that a certain percentage should be fixed for the new entrants. Otherwise, it would be impossible to carry on. Even the Government of India adopted a similar policy, though not now, in view of the acute, foreign exchange position. For a long time people who were in the trade had a monopoly with regard to export and import permits. After some time, the Government of India amended the rule to the effect that 25 per cent of the quota would be reserved for new entrants. Some such policy on the part of the Madras Government will go a long way in encouraging such people as want to enter business provided they are genuine cases. Sometimes some people would like to have a permit for monetary benefit. I know that the Government will not encourage such tendencies.

Another factor the Government should understand. The new entrant will find it very difficult to compete with the fleet-owners who are having forty or fifty buses. With the buses they have, with the money at their disposal, and with their resources to engage lawyers to fight out their case, it will be very difficult for the new

13th September 1958] [Sri Mohamed Raza Khan]

entrants to compete with the fleet-owners. I feel, in conclusion, that the Government will do well to reserve some portion ranging from 20 to 40 per cent to the new entrants.

THE HON. SRI V. RAMAIAH : Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Resolution is brought forward to help more or less private operators as such. Therefore, let us not go into the question of nationalization now. Let me not reply to that point. I shall try to stick to the terms of the Resolution. The hon. Member Sri Mohamed Raza Khan wanted me to inform the House about the number of new entrants into this bus industry from the year 1946. I am happy that there is one Member who has been following the development of this industry for the last twelve or thirteen years. He himself in his speech started to state the position of this industry in the year 1946. None of the Members could have imagined to have such a Resolution then. It was not an attractive industry at all then. There was a lot of competition no doubt among the operators. But it was never considered a paying industry. It was never considered an important industry to be taken up by leading persons or men with sufficient money to run it. It was left to a particular section of people who were normally not well-supported. But the industry has grown up in the course of the last ten or twelve years. It has grown up to such an extent that there is not only a growing demand that more and more people should get into the industry but 3–40 p.m. it has also come to the extent of asking this hon. House to pass a Resolution to amend a particular Government Order in order to allow new entrants to come in. Sir, the Government have, at no time, prevented any new entrants from coming in. But, knowing the nature and the growth of the industry for the past many years and the fact that it has never had a smooth growth or sailing, the Government at one time decided that for an effective or economic operation of bus transport, they must have a minimum of five buses. So, this minimum viable unit was fixed, which the hon. Member Mr. Mohamed Raza Khan himself wants. The Government have been taking many steps to see that this viable unit is built up as quickly as possible. It is to help build up this viable unit that the Government passed that particular Government Order which is sought to be amended by this Resolution. Well, it has its own difficulties. It did work for some time and later on due to the demand from the newcomers to enter the industry, a clash started between the newcomers and the persons who were already well-settled in the industry.

Sir, very often it is stated that it is the bus operator that earns more than any other professional person. It has come to that level. For any small mistake the matter is immediately rushed to the High Court. Sir, on this Government Order, there were some decisions. A particular decision was given by the High Court, which was later on set aside by the Supreme Court. Apart from this Government Order as such, for the past one year or nearly two years, I have received a number of representations that newcomers should not be entirely shut out. I know, from the way this industry has

[Sri V. Ramaiah] [13th September 1958

been growing up, that anyone with initiative, resources and capital can participate in this induscry with success in view of so many improvements made on so many sides.

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition referred to what was happening in America. Sir, I am also really dreaming of a period when we can come up to that level. From the way we are progressing, I definitely feel that we will come up to that level or standard. Particularly many of us who only know about this country and this State, who have been in the habit of travelling constantly and who have been watching the progress of this industry, will know the progress that we have made not in the far distant past but in the course of the last ten years, in the matter of road development and transport. About five or ten years ago, the maximum distance permitted for any operator was only 90 miles and he ought to run his buses within 90 miles a day. He could not travel beyond that and the actual distance could only be thirty miles. I know travelling for thirty miles was a big task or venture at that time. To-day it has developed. I have allowed a maximum distance of 180 miles for ordinary buses and 250 miles for express buses per day. We have introduced a number of long-route buses. The demand for long-route buses is ever increasing. We have fixed a distance of 250 miles for long-route buses. As the road conditions improve, it would go up. A number of long-route buses are already plying. Any passenger can get into a bus in Salem and reach Madurai without a change-over or break. This may look very small to those who have seen America, but to us who have seen only this country, it looks that we are making progress. It is quite fast enough. We are attempting to introduce a direct service from Tiruchirappalli to Madras. The demand is large and it is ever growing. It is not as if the Government or the Transport Authority is forcing the operators to take to this service. The demand is coming from them. We can do it safely and comfortably and see how progress is made.

Regarding the Government Order and this Resolution, if I go item by item and if I accept all of them, I will again have to go to the High Court to get it smashed. Instead of helping the poor operator, I will be putting him to greater difficulties and greater hardships. But we are not keeping quiet ever since the Government Order was issued. The difficulties of small operators have been brought to the notice of the Government and I have met various bodies and all those who are interested in bus transport and issued a new order, which covers almost all the points which have been raised in this particular Resolution, and which would produce greater satisfaction and greater effect.

My hon. Friend Mr. Purushotham wanted the Government to raise the distance limit from fifteen miles to twenty-five miles in the case of new entrants. The limit of fifteen miles is nothing sacred nor the limit of twenty-five miles. According to the latest Government Order, the whole transport system has been divided into three groups. One group consists of routes covering a distance of fifteen miles, another group from 15 to 75 miles and the third group from 75

to 250 miles. When it was decided to have these three groups, I was only thinking of the passengers. To-day as it is, no passenger can get a seat in any bus in the mofussil for a distance of fifteen or twenty miles. As the demand from passengers has been going on increasing, even if I put in more buses, it would not be of much help. The person who wants to travel up to a distance of twenty or thirty miles will normally have to buy a ticket for a longer distance. Therefore, we thought that we could run a shuttle service to clear away as many people as possible from the towns as soon as their work was over. In order to help long distance passengers, I have decided to introduce Express buses. If I leave it to the normal service as such with its present number of buses and the timings and all that, it will more and more irritate the passenger and delay his work. But the Express buses will cover a long distance in a short time with lesser number of stops. This Express service is becoming very popular and it will continue to grow more popular.

With regard to long distance express routes, I feel that pure efficiency should be the criterion for deciding who should be the long distance operator and I cannot take a risk in respect of this matter. I cannot put rickety buses on the road and ask the passengers to get down in the middle of the journey.

Regarding the build-up of viable units, in the face of the demand for an increase in the number of buses, I feel that leaving the middle routes as such, small operators can come up without much difficulty in the course of the next few years. So, as it is, we are keeping a close watch on the progress of the transport service and we are giving a fair chance to the new entrants to come in, take their turn as bus operators and thus help the industry. I know that the industry is thriving to-day and I do not want to give the benefit to those who come in during the boom period alone and then run away when it is in some sort of static position because I am more interested in the industry growing and thriving. It is with that object in view that I limited the coming in of new entrants. There are also really efficient people to-day with resources, who have not been given a chance to enter the field. There are also a number of institutions having very efficient workshop facilities and experience. It is only with a view to affording an opportunity to those people, the co-operative institutions and many other categories of persons that we have given this chance. I am sure the present Government Order will go to the help of everybody and I do not feel there is any necessity to accept this Resolution now. The Resolution as drafted by the hon. Member will not help the man whom he has in view. On the other hand, the Resolution, if passed, will put those people whom the hon. Member wants to help, in more difficulties or, if I may use a strong term, will kill them.

3-50 p.m.

* SRI K. M. RAMASAMY GOUNDER : Mr. Chairman, Sir, apart from nationalization, all the observations that have been made here are beside the point and after all, we are trying to help new

[Sri K. M. Ramasamy Gounder] [13th September 1958

entrants to come in. The idea in bringing forward this Resolution is to see that there is no monopoly and that new entrants are encouraged as much as possible. I have personal knowledge of this affair. New entrants, according to the present Government Order, that is, G.O. No. 1298 . . .

THE HON. SRI V. RAMAIAH : That is not the present Government Order. The present Government Order will meet all your needs much more than what is contemplated in the Resolution.

* SRI K. M. RAMASAMY GOUNDER : With that assurance, I have no objection to withdraw the Resolution.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Sri Ramasamy Gounder, are you withdrawing the Resolution?

* SRI K. M. RAMASWAMY GOUNDER : Since the Hon. Minister has given an assurance, I withdraw the Resolution.

The Resolution was, by leave, withdrawn.

(2) CLASSIFICATION OF ALL THE MUSLIMS AS BACKWARD.

* SRI MOHAMED RAZA KHAN : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I move the Resolution standing in my name, namely—

"This Council recommends to the Government to abolish the classification of some Muslims whose mother tongue is Urdu as forward and classify all the Muslims irrespective of whether their mother tongue is Urdu or not as backward."

There is not much of controversy in this matter except for the historical background and I would state it as briefly as possible. Formerly, the Muslim community as a whole was taken to be backward for the purpose of grant of concessions in the educational field and also for the purpose of appointments in the Government service. A time there was—I think in the 1920's—when the policy of the Government was to appoint two Muslims out of every twelve appointments that were made. That was really responsible, to some extent, for a good number of Muslims getting into Government service although the proportion was not fixed on the population basis. Apart from that, the Muslims being very backward in the field of education, some educational facilities and concessions were given to them and these were enjoyed by the community for a period of more than two decades. But a change came about in the year 1948 or so when Sri Omandur Ramaswami Reddiar was the Chief Minister, which reduced the number from two out of twelve to one out of twelve. That also went on for a period of four or five years. But with the change in the Constitution, it was thought and rightly thought that classification on the basis of community should go and that the question of appointment of persons based on religion, language or community should be decided on a planned basis. Then the Government divided the communities into backward communities